



September 16, 2022

The Honorable Erick L. Larsh
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California
County of Orange
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

RE: Response to the 2021-2022 Orange County Grand Jury Report re: *How is Orange County Addressing Homelessness?*

Honorable Judge Larsh:

In accordance with Penal Code 933.05, the City of Dana Point submits the following response to the report, findings, and recommendations of the 2021-2022 Orange County Grand Jury report entitled, *How is Orange County Addressing Homelessness?*

Findings by the Orange County Grand Jury

F1. South Orange County SPA cities lack low threshold emergency shelters resulting in more homeless encampments and individuals living on the streets.

Response: The City of Dana Point **AGREES** with the response that the South Orange County SPA lacks low threshold emergency shelters and also acknowledges that homeless numbers in south Orange County, per the Point-In-Time (PIT) count, have been decreasing, likely as a direct result of successful outreach and diversion activities.

F3. The County of Orange and cities within Orange County have been inconsistent in collaboration for support of shelters and services which has resulted in missed opportunities to end homelessness.

Response: The City of Dana Point **PARTIALLY AGREES** with the finding. South SPA cities had been consistently meeting with the County on potential shelter locations prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The City continues to successfully provide fulltime outreach and diversion services.

F4. There are an insufficient number of rental units available to those exiting Emergency Shelters, resulting in the majority returning to homelessness when leaving the shelters.

Response: The City of Dana Point **PARTIALLY AGREES** with the finding. The City is not aware of data that supports this conclusion, but does believe there is a lack of affordable housing units in south Orange County, not just applicable to homeless individuals and families. The City also believes a greater allocation of qualified Mental Health resources are needed to facilitate successful shelter exits from homelessness into housing.

Recommendations by the Orange County Grand Jury

R1. By July 1, 2023 the CoC and County of Orange should leverage funding to persuade south orange county cities to open a regional, low-threshold emergency shelter for the homeless, in addition to the Laguna Beach Friendship Shelter. (F1)

Response: The recommendation REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS by the County and the CoC. The City is supportive of the County of Orange collaborating with cities to open and operate a regional emergency shelter.

R2. By July 1, 2023 south, OC SPA cities should collaborate in siting and funding a low-threshold emergency shelter for homeless, in addition to the Friendship Shelter in Laguna Beach. (F2)

Response: The recommendation REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS and the City is open to continued collaboration with south SPA cities and the County.

R4. By July 1, 2024 the County of Orange and cities should collaborate to open facilities that can house people with severe and persistent mental illness and addition issues in a secure setting. (F2)

Response: The recommendation has been IMPLEMENTED. The County recently opened OC Be Well, an all-inclusive campus for stabilization from substance abuse, trauma, and other mental health crises. After stabilization, Permanent Supportive Housing units have been established county-wide, including in the City of Dana Point. The City's Housing Element was recently certified by the State's Housing and Community Development Agency and includes zoning that can accommodate additional units. The City also participates in the Orange County Housing Financing Trust and actively meets with developers and property owners to evaluate feasibility.

R5. By July 1, 2023 the County of Orange, cities and CoC should collaborate to encourage the development of housing affordable to individuals exiting the emergency shelters in Orange County. (F3, F4, F5)

Response: The recommendation has been IMPLEMENTED. The City's Housing Element was recently certified by the State's Housing and Community Development Agency and includes programming that supports and facilitates affordable housing. The City also participates in the Orange County Housing Financing Trust and actively meets with developers and property owners to evaluate feasibility. The City has also conducted hearings and facilitated the financing of a permanent supportive housing project in Dana Point. The City is open to continued collaboration with local cities, non-profit partners and the County.

R6. By December 1, 2022 the County of Orange, cities and CoC should collaborate to increase the number of housing opportunities for transitional aged youth. (F6)

Response: The City of Dana Point believes this recommendation has been IMPLEMENTED by the County. The County's office of Care Coordination has created a registry to actively case manage with resource providers. In addition to these efforts the County is soliciting for housing resources that specifically address the needs of this population.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael A. Killebrew". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael A. Killebrew
City Manager

c: Orange County Grand Jury